

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 7th November 1896.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
BENGALI.					
CALCUTTA.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bangavasi" ...	Calcutta	20,000	31st October, 1896.	
2	"Basumati" ...	Ditto			
3	"Hitaishi" ...	Ditto	800		
4	"Hitavadi" ...	Ditto	About 4,000	30th ditto.	
5	"Mihir-o-Sudhakar" ...	Ditto	2,500	31st ditto.	
6	"Navayuga" ...	Ditto		31st ditto.	
7	"Sahachar" ...	Ditto	About 500	28th ditto.	
8	"Samay" ...	Ditto	3,000		
9	"Sanjivani" ...	Ditto	3,000		
10	"Som Prakash" ...	Ditto	800		
<i>Daily.</i>					
1	"Banga Vidya Prakashika"	Ditto	About 350	30th and 31st October and 1st and 2nd November, 1896.	
2	"Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika."	Ditto	1,000	29th October and 1st to 3rd November, 1896.	
3	"Samvad Prabhakar" ...	Ditto	1,250		
4	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto	200		
5	"Sulabh Dainik" ...	Ditto	Read by 3,000	30th and 31st October and 2nd and 3rd November, 1896.	
HINDI.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bharat Mitra" ...	Ditto	2,000	29th October, 1896.	
2	"Hindi Bangavasi" ...	Ditto	10,000	2nd November, 1896.	
PERSIAN.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Hublul Mateen" ...	Ditto		26th October, 1896.	
URDU.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide."	Ditto	310	29th ditto.	
2	"General and Gauhariasfi"	Ditto	330	24th ditto.	
BURDWAN DIVISION.					
BENGALI.					
<i>Fortnightly.</i>					
1	"Bankura Darpan" ...	Bankura	450	1st November, 1896.	
2	"Ulubaria Darpan" ...	Ulubaria	700		
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan	About 250		
2	"Chinsura Vartavaha" ...	Chinsura	550		
3	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly	1,145	30th October, 1896.	
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.					
BENGALI.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Murshidabad Hitaishi" ...	Murshidabad	826		
2	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi" ...	Berhampore	200		
3	"Pratihar" ...	Ditto	603		

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.	
ORISSA DIVISION.						
URIYA.						
Monthly.						
1	"Brahma " ...	Cuttack ...	160		Only six copies have been issued since the paper was received in January 1894. Some 200 copies of each issue are said to have been circulated, but no subscribers have been registered. This paper is said to have some circulation in the Division, but the number of subscribers could not be ascertained.	
2	"Indradhanu " ...	Ditto ...				
3	"Shikshabandhu " ...	Ditto ...	...			
4	"Utkalprabha " ...	Mayurbhunj ...				
Weekly.						
1	"Sambalpur Hitaishini " ...	Bamra in the Central Provinces.				
2	"Samvad Vahika " ...	Balasore ...	190	10th September, 1896.		
3	"Uriya and Navasamvad " ...	Ditto ..	309	9th ditto.		
4	"Utkal Dipika " ...	Cuttack ...	480	12th ditto.		
PATNA DIVISION.						
HINDI.						
Monthly.						
1	"Bihar Bandhu " ...	Bankipur ...	500			
Weekly.						
1	"Aryavarta " ...	Dinapur ...	1,000	31st October, 1896.		
URDU.						
Weekly.						
1	"Akhbar-i-Al Punch " ...	Bankipur ...	500	22nd ditto.		
2	"Gaya Punch ...	Gaya ...	400			
RAJSHAHI DIVISION.						
BENGALI.						
Weekly.						
1	"Hindu Ranjika " ...	Boalia, Rajshahi ...	195			
2	"Rangpur Dikprakash " ...	Kakina, Rangpur ...	180			
HINDI.						
Monthly.						
1	"Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	500			
DACCA DIVISION.						
BENGALI.						
Fortnightly.						
1	"Kasipur Nivasi " ...	Kasipur, Barisal ...	244			
Weekly.						
1	"Barisal Hitaishi " ...	Barisal ...				
2	"Charu Mihir " ...	Mymensingh ...	900			
3	"Dacca Prakash " ...	Dacca ...	2,400			
4	"Saraswat Patra " ...	Do. ...	About 440			
5	"Vikrampur " ...	Lauhajangha, Dacca ..	240			
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.						
Weekly.						
1	"Dacca Gazette " ...	Dacca ...	500			
BENGALI.						
CHITTAGONG DIVISION.						
Fortnightly.						
1	"Tripura Prakash " ...	Comilla ...	700			
Weekly.						
1	"Sansodhini " ...	Chittagong ...	120			
BENGALI.						
ASSAM.						
Fortnightly.						
1	"Paridarshak-o-Srihattavasi"	Sylhet ...				

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE *Hublul Mateen* of the 26th October says that, judging from the attitude which has been taken up by the European press, unless the Sultan meets the demand of the Powers in regard to Armenia, the Powers will certainly depose him. The rumour of an attempt to dethrone the Sultan by the Christian Powers of Europe, however, will create a convulsion in all countries inhabited by Musalmans. A *jehad* is imminent, if the European press correctly reports public opinion in Europe.

HUBLUL MATEEN,
Oct. 26th, 1896.

2. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* of the 31st October has the following:—

Vilification of the Sultan by the Native press of India.

Many of the native papers in Bengal are vilely abusing the Sultan in connection with the Armenian affair, and thereby giving proof of their hostility to the Musalmans. We fail to see any connection between the Sultan and the Indians, and particularly the Indian editors, which can justify them in venting their spleen against the ruler of Turkey. A nation of slaves that they are, the Indians have not the mental calibre to grasp and discuss the policy of the Sultan. The very name "Sultan" loses its sanctity when pronounced by an Indian. The Indians should, therefore, desist from talking about the Sultan or his policy, or, if they cannot keep themselves silent on the Eastern question, let them first carefully consider both sides of it, and then, if they find the Sultan in the wrong, give him advice, but with caution and respect. They have no right whatever to abuse him.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

Except the vernacular newspaper the *Dainik*, which has taken a sensible view of the Sultan's position, and the *Indian Mirror* and the *Bengalce*, which are silent on the question, there is not a single English or vernacular paper in Bengal but has made its attack on the present ruler of Turkey in connection with the Armenian affair. To prevent a recurrence of Hindu-Musalman quarrels in India in consequence of this conduct of the Hindu editors, the Musalmans of Madras resolved at a meeting to memorialise the Viceroy, requesting His Excellency to pass an order prohibiting Indian newspapers from abusing or applying any bad epithet to the Sultan, who is looked upon by the Musalmans all over the world as the defender of their faith. The members of the Muhammadan Literary Society in Midnapore have also submitted a similar memorial to the Viceroy. It is hoped that Musalmans all over India will follow the example set by their Madras and Midnapore co-religionists, and memorialise the Government on the subject, and that the Government will listen to the prayer of its Muhammadan subjects. The liberties which the Indian newspapers are taking with the Sultan, if unchecked, may lead to disastrous consequences.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

3. The *Sahachar* of the 28th October says that one Umanath Chaudhuri,

Mysterious death of a young man at Rajbandh in the Burdwan district.

a student of the 3rd-year class of the Ripon College, lived in his maternal uncle's house in Baburam Sil's Lane, Calcutta. On the evening of the day on which his college closed for the Durga Puja, he left his residence, telling his grandmother that he was going to see a friend off at the Howrah station and would soon be back. But the whole night passed away and he did not return. On the next day, at about 5 P.M., his uncle received the following telegram from him addressed from Rajbandh, on the East Indian Railway:—"Seriously ill. Come up with a doctor." At 9 P.M. the same night, his uncle started for Rajbandh with a doctor, and on arriving there was taken to the local zamindar's house, where he found his nephew lying dead. The uncle then heard the following story of his nephew's illness and death from the people of the place:—Umanath was sent to the zamindar's house on the morning of the previous day by the station master. He had arrived at the Rajbandh station at about 1-30 or 2 A.M., and enquired about the house of one Jyotish Mitra. After he had proceeded a little distance from the station he was attacked by three dacoits, who, having robbed him of everything he had on

SAHACHAR,
Oct. 28th, 1896.

his person, poured something into his mouth which made him senseless. On regaining his consciousness at daybreak, he came back to the station, and told his history to the station-master, who sent him to the zamindar's house. There he bathed and having taken his meal lay down to rest. Shortly after a gurgling sound issued from his throat, and the local doctor pronounced his condition very serious. He died just after the telegram to his uncle had been despatched. The circumstances attending the death of this young man seem involved in deep mystery.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 30th, 1896.

4. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th October has the following:—

The Commissioner of the Presidency Division in a missionary case.

One Pramathanath Ghosh, a minor Hindu boy of Krishnagar, expressed his willingness to become a Christian. The Christian Missionaries could not let this opportunity escape, and they at once lodged the young boy in their house with the view of converting him to Christianity, without caring to know whether he was intellectually in a position to understand the principles of Christianity or to critically judge the comparative merits of different systems of religion. The boy's father went to the Missionaries and humbly requested them to hand over his son to him. The Missionaries declining to do so, the gentleman had no other course left him except lodging a complaint against them with Kumar Girindra Narayan Dev, Joint-Magistrate, Krishnagar. The Joint-Magistrate issued a search warrant, ordering the Missionaries to produce the boy in court. But he thereby offended the Christian Commissioner of the Presidency Division, who could not but take the side of the Christian Missionaries in this their worthy cause. He ordered the transfer of the case to the file of the District Magistrate, and wrote the following letter to the Missionaries:—

"I have the honour to inform you that, after calling for the papers of the case and the explanations of the Joint-Magistrate, Kumar Girindra Narayan Dev, I have informed him, through the Magistrate of the District, that I consider his order of the 19th July unjustifiable and against the weight of evidence. I have also directed that he is under no circumstances to be left in charge of the station again."

One of the principal arguments of Sir Charles Elliott against the proposal of separating the judicial from the executive functions, is that the present system is calculated to enable the District Magistrate to exercise a salutary control over his subordinates. But if the Commissioner of a Division can act in this arbitrary way, are not District Magistrates more likely to err in this way and commit mistakes at every step? We hope that our just and impartial Lieutenant-Governor will not fail to teach the Commissioner of the Presidency Division a lesson. What was the fault of the Joint-Magistrate? The District Magistrate, to whose file the case was transferred, has declared the boy a minor, and this being the case, the Joint-Magistrate was fully justified in issuing a search warrant. Let us put a case to the Commissioner. Let us suppose that he has a minor son who expresses his willingness to become a Musalman, and he is consequently confined by a Maulvi for the purpose of being converted to the religion of the Prophet. The Commissioner asks the Maulvi to hand over his son to him, but he declines to do so. Will he not, in that case, think it quite justifiable to issue a search warrant? The manner in which the Commissioner has interfered with the Joint-Magistrate of Krishnagar is extremely reprehensible. We hope the Lieutenant-Governor will publish a Resolution against the Commissioner's unjustifiable strictures on the Joint-Magistrate, and thereby earn the thanks of the public.

BANKURA DARPAN.
Nov. 1st, 1896.

5. The *Bankura Darpan* of the 1st November has heard that Mr. Manisty,

The Magistrateship of Bankura.

Officiating Excise Commissioner, will come to Bankura on Mr. Bonham-Carter's transfer to Tippera in the course of this month. Though Mr. Manisty is an old civilian, he knows nothing of the Bankura district. In a year of scarcity and distress like the present, it would have been better to re-appoint Mr. Vincent to the district.

(d)—Education.

6. The *Bangavasi* of the 31st October observes that the re-organisation of the Education Department will not benefit the natives, who have, under the new scheme, been banished from the higher posts in the Department. There will be no more Bhudevs and Nyayaratnas.

BANGAVASI,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

7. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th October complains that the plague scare in Calcutta has become a fruitful source of annoyance and oppression to the people. Certain stringent regulations have been passed, under colour of which municipal officers are ill-treating the public. A few bags of gram belonging to a shop-keeper were, a few days ago, destroyed by the Health Officer on the suspicion that the man who lay on those bags had been attacked with bubonic fever. A zanana lady belonging to a respectable family in Kidderpore died of mumps attended with fever. She was treated by a local medical practitioner, Babu Umes Chandra Pal, M.B. The municipal authorities, however, delayed the removal of the dead body to the burning ghat. Dr. Simpson, who arrived a few hours after the death, inspected the dead body, removed all the male members of the family from the room in which the body was placed, cross-examined an old woman, and drew a quantity of blood from the dead body for the purpose of making a bacteriological examination. The dead body was then allowed to be cremated. Another occurrence took place in the house of Mr. J. Ghosal. If this is not highhandedness, nothing is. Let the town be cleansed by all means, but let there be no oppression in the name of sanitation. The Lieutenant-Governor should have his attention drawn to the grievance of the Calcutta public.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 30th, 1896.

8. In his last annual report the Sanitary Commissioner, Bengal, writes that the Chairmen and Commissioners of the mufassal municipalities do not give sanitary officers any help during their tours of inspection. The latter, says he, are not even favoured with a visit by the former. With reference to these remarks of the Sanitary Commissioner, the Lieutenant-Governor has strictly enjoined the authorities of mufassal municipalities to give the sanitary officers in future all the help they require from them. The *Hitavadi*, however, regrets that the Lieutenant-Governor should have at all made any reflections on the conduct of the Chairmen and Commissioners of the mufassal municipalities. They are not bad or illiterate men, and it is wrong to insinuate that they possess no sense of duty.

HITAVADI.

Dr. Dyson's strictures on the Chairmen and Commissioners of the mufassal municipalities are based on the following circumstances:—Dr. Vaughan, Deputy Sanitary Commissioner, Bengal, paid a visit of inspection to Serampore on the *Punarjatra* festival day. He sent previous intimation to that effect to the Chairman, who, in reply, wrote that the day mentioned was a holiday, and the Deputy Commissioner would please appoint another day. To this courteous letter Dr. Vaughan sent a rather peremptory reply. He declined to grant the Chairman's request, and required him to see him on the *Punarjatra* festival day. The Chairman courteously replied that he would see the Deputy Commissioner the day after that appointed by him. If in the meantime he required any information, it would be supplied to him by the municipal office, which would be opened. This made the Deputy Commissioner angry, and he reported that the Chairman of the Serampore Municipality did not see him, and did not even take the trouble to write him a letter, but sent a Conservancy Overseer to tell him that he could not see him on the day appointed. The fact, however, is that the Chairman wrote a courteous letter, but it was the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner himself who wrote a discourteous letter. The Lieutenant-Governor should make an enquiry into this case.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

HITAVADI,
Oct. 30th, 1896.

9. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th October complains that trains stop at the Simultala station, on the East Indian Railway, but passengers are not allowed to get up or get down.

A railway grievance.

The time which the engines take in taking water at the station is not short, and tickets might be issued at the station without any inconvenience or additional expenditure to the Railway Company. The railway authorities should take this matter into their consideration.

BANGAVASI,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

10. The *Bangavasi* of the 31st October complains that there is no special accommodation for female passengers in the steamers which run between Damukdia and Sara-

A steamer grievance.

ghat. This is a source of inconvenience and annoyance. The steamer authorities can easily remove this cause of complaint, and it is a great discredit to them that they have not done this so long. Pecuniarily also they lose by not removing this grievance of the passengers. Many are obliged not to take ladies with them when travelling on board these steamers.

(h)—*General.*

SULABH DAINIK,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

11. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 31st October hopes that injustice will not be done to Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt under Sir Alexander Mackenzie, but that he will be appointed Commissioner of the Burdwan Division in the place of Mr. Buckland. It is hoped Mr. Bolton will induce the Lieutenant Governor to make this appointment. Mr. Dutt has acquired a reputation as Officiating Commissioner of the Orissa Division which it is not the lot of all Commissioners to earn.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

DARUSSALTANAT AND
URDU GUIDE,
Oct. 29th, 1896.

12. The *Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide* of the 29th October says that the Supreme Government seems disinclined to take any measures to avert the impending famine which threatens to depopulate India. For humanity's sake Government should without delay forbid exportation of food-grain from India.

Government's duty in the scarcity.

SULABH DAINIK,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

13. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 31st October says that though half of the month of *Kartik* is past, not a drop of rain has fallen, and the south wind is scorching up the standing crops. The outlook is exceedingly gloomy. The only means now of saving the people from starvation and death is to stop the export of corn. But will that be done? Mr. Egerton, Magistrate of Patna, issued a circular prohibiting, on pain of imprisonment, the export of food-stuff from his district. But he has been ordered by Government to withdraw this circular. In Calcutta, there is at present a stock of seven lakh maunds of rice. So the Calcutta people need not feel the pinch of scarcity if export of rice is stopped. It being the duty of the Sovereign to keep his subjects from dying of starvation, Government should at least for this year stop all export of food-grain from India.

Government's duty in the distress.

BANGAVASI,
Oct. 31st, 1896.

14. The *Bangavasi* of the 31st October has the following :—
There is famine all over India. We do not remember to have ever experienced or heard of such a widespread famine. Even the famine of 1877-78 was not so acute and widespread. That year rice sold at 8 seers per rupee even in Chaitra and Baisakh, but this year so early as Aswin and Kartik rice is selling at 7 seers per rupee. That year, again, there was no acute water-scarcity, whereas this year people are suffering greatly from want of water even during this cold season. In 1877, famine broke out only in Bihar and in parts of the North-Western Provinces and Madras. This year famine is seen from one end of the country to the other; it has broken out simultaneously in the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Bihar, the Central Provinces, Central India, Rajputana, Orissa, North Burma, the north of Madras, Chota Nagpur, the Berars, the north and east of Bombay, and in the Backergunge, Rajshahi, Burdwan and Dacca districts of Bengal. In 1877, again, there was not a total failure of the autumn crops as there has been this year. The *rabi* crops have

Famine all over India.

been totally destroyed this year along with the *aman* crops. In 1877, the famine-stricken provinces were supplied with food by Burma, Backergunge, Malay and Singapore. But this year Asia lies paralysed as it were, and there has been no good harvest anywhere in the continent. What was never dreamt of is going to take place. Wheat is going to be imported from California in America and Mesopotamia in Turkey. The prospects of the crops, it is true, are more or less satisfactory in Sindh, Mysore and a few other parts of the country. But of what avail will they be at a time of widespread famine? Millions are already starving and grain riots are taking place here, there and everywhere. Goaded to desperation the hungry people are committing robbery and dacoity in broad daylight, and are even snatching food from people's mouths. It is true that the strong hand of the executive is still keeping the peace, but human patience has its limits, and when those bounds will be overstepped the fear of punishment will not keep the hungry millions in check. The grain merchants have been thrown into a consternation. The present is full of anxiety, and the future is enveloped in gloom.

It is, however, reassuring that the Government has come to the rescue of the people. The Governor-General, the Home Member, Mr. Woodburn, and the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and the North-Western Provinces have already taken the field in right earnest. The Viceroy's Simla speech of the 15th October has given us great satisfaction, and it is a great consolation to see that the Government is taking proper steps to give effect to the Viceroy's promise. The Viceroy in his speech plainly admitted the existence of famine, and assured the people that the Government would not spare expense to save the lives of the famine-stricken people. His Excellency did not, however, admit that the famine had assumed serious proportions, and hoped that relief works in the shape of railways and canals would effectually put a stop to its progress. His Excellency did not, however, give a forecast of his famine measures. He, moreover, observed that official charity was not and could not be expected to be so far-reaching as private charity. The Viceroy need not take the trouble of teaching charity to the Hindus. Many of the latter have already untied their purse-strings. But we earnestly pray His Excellency not to think that the accounts of famine published in the press are exaggerated. The hungry can never exaggerate, can never speak falsely.

Measures great and small have already been adopted to check the progress of famine. Relief works and workhouses are to be opened. Railways are to be constructed, canals to be cut, and wells to be dug. Everything is proceeding steadily and cautiously, and it is hoped that the hungry poor will not die of starvation. But what of the poor middle classes who will never condescend to beg even if they die of starvation, who will die in silence rather than let people know that they have nothing to eat? During the last Bihar famine excellent arrangements were made for the relief of these people. During the famine of 1877 many unscrupulous officials fattened on the money granted for the relief of the poor. Steps should be taken this time to prevent such scandal, but at the same time no miserly economy should be enforced.

15. Correspondents of the same paper complain of widespread famine.

The prevailing famine.

The *aman* crops have been damaged in Majigram and destroyed in Kaichar in the Burdwan district.

Coarse rice is selling at ten seers per rupee in Jajpur in the Cuttack district. In Comilla the grain market is rising every day, and the poor are in great distress. Rice is selling at six rupees per maund in Sonamganj in the Sylhet district. The number of beggars is increasing. The crops have been all but destroyed in Raniganj in the Burdwan district. The grain market is rising and the poor are starving. Crops have been seriously damaged in Amadpur in the same district. The price of rice is rising. Rice is selling at $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee in Muzaffarpur, wheat at six seers, and flour at four seers. The prospects of the crops have been seriously damaged in Nakipur in the Khulna district. The condition of the people is hopeless in Maliara in the Bankura district. There is both food and water-scarcity in Arjunpur in the Murshidabad district. Rice is selling at 10 seers per rupee. There has been a six-anna crop in Salna in Assam. There has been no jute crop. Fine rice is selling at Rs. 6-8 per maund, middling at Rs. 5-8, and coarse at Rs. 3-8. Everything is selling dear in

BANGAVASI,
Oct. 21st, 1896

Malda, rice at eight seers per rupee. In Sonatikari in Krishnagar rice is selling at Rs. 3-8 and Rs. 4 per maund. The *aman* and *rabi* crops have been damaged in Senet in the Hooghly district. Coarse paddy is selling at Rs 2-8 per maund. In Janai in the same district *balam* rice is selling at Rs. 5 and flour at Rs. 7 per maund. Vegetables too are selling dear. The paddy crop is withering away in Hetampur in the Birbhum district. Acute water-scarcity also prevails. Rice is selling at 9 seers per rupee in Asansol in the Burdwan district, and *aus* rice at ten *kathas* per rupee in Syam Kurha in the Nadia district. Famine is in full swing in Rajmahal. Rice is selling at Rs. 5-12 per maund. Rice is selling dearer in Brindaban. It is selling there at Rs. 6 and Rs. 6-8 per maund. The number of street beggars is swelling every day. There is prevailing scarcity of food and water in Guatali in the Jessore district. The *aus* crop has been damaged, and the *aman* crop destroyed. The jute crop too has not been satisfactory. The grain market has abnormally risen, and the people are in great distress.

SULABH DAINIK,
Nov. 2nd, 1896.

16. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 2nd November has heard it rumoured that Sir Alexander Mackenzie has proposed to the Government of India the suspension of the export trade of Bengal in grain for at least a year, and

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's proposals for meeting the distress.

the grant of some increase of pay to Government servants on receipt of small pay. His Honour, it is said, will resign if his suggestions are not accepted by the Government of India. Praised be Sir Alexander; praised be his noble heart! If the rumour be correct, the people of Bengal do not know how to worship their Lieutenant-Governor. It is doubtful whether the Government of India will sanction the proposals. The Viceroys who now-a-days come out to sit at the helm of affairs in India are seldom men of large minds, but are mere mediums for carrying out the orders of the Secretary of State, and care only for their own appointments. It is said that all the members of the Viceroy's Council, except Mr. Woodburn, have objected to the carrying out of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's proposals. Mr. Woodburn's support, however, has some meaning.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Nov. 3rd, 1896.

17. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 3rd November says that though railways and canals have facilitated transport of grain from one part of the country to another, the general failure of crops in all the provinces, not excepting Burma, will leave little to be carried from one province to another, especially when export of corn has not yet been stopped. It is clear that to avert the consequences of famine, grain must be brought from foreign countries. Wheat is being already imported from California. Canada, the Argentine Republic, Australasia, and Russia also, have been spoken of as probable sources of supply. But the sudden rise in the price of American wheat, and the rise in the rate of exchange in consequence of a further depreciation of silver, make it doubtful whether it will do to import American wheat. It is, however, reassuring to find that the Supreme and Provincial Governments are doing their best to save the people of India from starvation. The situation would have been really alarming in Bengal if Sir Charles Elliott had been Lieutenant-Governor now. Only last year he declared in the Supreme Council that extension of railways had made famine an impossibility in India, and that there was therefore no necessity for maintaining a famine fund. Sir Alexander Mackenzie will not allow the people of Bengal to be starved, or any official to suppress the fact of distress in any place. In the North-Western Provinces, Sir Antony MacDonnell has already provided on the relief works for three hundred thousand persons, and will provide for more if necessary. Lord Elgin has confidence in Sir Antony and praised him in Council the other day. His Excellency promised to give every help to the Provincial Governments. He also said: "Famine, which is the result of a sudden failure of our accustomed rainfall, is a foe the approach of which no Government can foretell and no prescience can altogether avert; but at the same time it is a foe which can be faced and overcome by prudence and foresight." This is perfectly true. And the Famine Fund was created solely for the purpose of coping with this enemy when it came down upon the people. The tax which was imposed for maintaining the fund is still collected, but the fund itself has disappeared. Who is to blame for

Government's duty in the distress.

this? Lord Elgin touched on every point relating to famine visitations, but was silent in regard to the Famine Fund. He said:—"This is a case in which the Government is fighting the people's battle." But what other duty can a sovereign have except fighting the people's battle? What is the necessity of a sovereign except for the purpose of looking after the welfare of his subjects? The people, however, have been fully assured by Lord Elgin's statement that Government is prepared to fight with the enemy. The writer has been gratified to find the Viceroy refer to the people's own duty in the present distress. But India is not England. The average earning of a man in India in a year is not more than Rs. 25, whilst that of a man in England is not less than Rs. 1,000. The people of India are therefore not in a position to help themselves to the extent that the people of England can. They will, of course, do all they can; but Lord Elgin will be deceived if he expects much from them. A whole district in India cannot in this respect spend what a single man can in England. Government will, therefore, have not only to open relief works for the able-bodied males of the lower classes, but to distribute rice and feed people gratis, render help to the poor gentry, and to sell grain at a cheap rate; and it will have to do all this in a manner which will not wound the caste prejudices of those who seek relief at its hands. Lord Elgin should remember that he is the ruler of a country of beggars and not of a rich country like England.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

18. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 2nd November says that the intense cold of Darjeeling not suiting the constitution of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, a rumour arose in European quarters that His Honour would resign. But if the Darjeeling climate does not suit him, His Honour can remain at Belvedere all through the year. The people of Bengal can on no account let him go now.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Nov. 2nd, 1896.

URIYA PAPERS.

19. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* of the 9th September observes that owing to the imposition of the cotton tax, the work of 7,000 looms has stopped in Bombay, thereby depriving not a few of their source of livelihood. The writer therefore thinks that the new law is literally a visitation on the Indian weavers, and suggests that the only remedy for this deplorable state of affairs lies, not in vain howlings, but in the adoption of practical measures.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Sept. 9th, 1896.

20. The *Utkaldipika* of the 12th September, alluding to the proposed formation of Union Committees and the imposition of a sanitary tax, makes the following observations:—

UTKALDIPIKA,
Sept. 12th, 1896.

The inhabitants of municipal areas are exempt from the payment of road and public works cesses, in consideration of their having to pay a municipal tax. Those of rural tracts pay the road and public works cesses. If the proposed tax, which is of the nature of a municipal tax, be levied from the latter, their burden will become heavier than that of townspeople. Should zamindars and raiyats be exempted from this double assessment, very few will be left from whom the tax could be realized, and the amount to be so realized would be too small to call for a legislative measure for its realization. In consequence of their low condition, village craftsmen will not come under the scope of the new law. All who shall pay will be the traders, money-lenders and Government servants. But most of these having cultivation and homesteads, and paying the road and public works cesses, for these and the amla class, numerically small, who generally live in municipal towns having to pay the municipal taxes there, it would not be equitable all round to saddle them with an additional taxation. The outcome of the whole measure will therefore be no financial gain, but widespread discontent in villages and an abuse of the power which is proposed to be given to village people, among whom, as a matter of fact, discord of some sort or other always prevails.

A cart tax would be inequitable. The road and public works cesses are levied for opening out communications and facilitating village traffic, and with

the exception of actual cultivators no one else possess carts in a village. If from fear of taxation, the raiyats give up their carts, the object with which the cesses are levied will be frustrated, while on the other hand the levy of the tax will subject the people to a double assessment.

The proposed marriage tax, too, does not commend itself to the writer. The measure has been abandoned by the Supreme Government in consideration of its disadvantages, and the argument that is now advanced by the Lieutenant-Governor for its introduction is not correct, as no unnecessary expenditure beyond what the social condition of the parties concerned requires is incurred. To meet even this is felt to be a difficulty, and the imposition of a fresh impost would entail further difficulties. The very name of a tax is obnoxious; a tax cannot legally be kept in arrears, and to be a defaulter means no small amount of harassment. The number of marriages among rich people in a year is not very large, and a large income cannot be expected from this source. It is true that for village improvements donations are frequently made on occasions of marriage. If village unions can by conciliatory and persuasive measures endeavour to realize these, they can do some good, but to attempt to effect this object by creating a fear of taxation would be fruitless.

Regarding the proposed tax on musical processions in streets, the writer observes that in consequence of the able and convincing arguments of the Hon'ble Mr. M. S. Das against the measure, the Legislative Council has expunged the provision from the Municipal Amendment Bill. It is therefore beyond question that a measure which is not adapted to advanced municipalities will be so in the case of mufassal villages.

UTKALDIPKA,
Sept. 10th, 1896.

21. A correspondent of the same paper, under the nom-de-plume "A Physician," complains of the deleterious nature of the country liquors sold at some places, rendered so by being kept in tin vessels. As this is a source of danger to public health the writer hopes that the matter will receive the attention of the higher authorities.

SAMVADVAHIKA.
Sept. 10th, 1896.

22. The *Samvadvahika* of the 10th September commends the ruling issued by the Bombay High Court, to the effect that police officers who being eye-witnesses to oppressions committed by other police officers for extorting confession, connive at the offence will be held equally guilty with the actual offenders, and expresses a hope that this will be given general application all over the country.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 7th November 1896.